

To: Logan, Paul[Logan.Paul@epa.gov]; Ward, W. Robert[Ward.Robert@epa.gov]; Matsumoto, Kimi[Matsumoto.Kimi@epa.gov]
From: Chin, Lucita
Sent: Mon 5/6/2013 3:16:25 PM
Subject: FW: fyi...from caspar newspaper

FYI

Lucita Chin

Associate Regional Counsel

U.S. EPA Region 8

1595 Wynkoop St.

Denver, CO 80202

303.312.7832

From: Bowling, Linda
Sent: Monday, May 06, 2013 9:15 AM
To: Hoskie, Sadie
Cc: Minter, Douglas; Chin, Lucita
Subject: RE: fyi...from caspar newspaper

Sadie,

Would you like me to send Kate the letter that she is requesting below? I think that she is referring to our April 8, 2013 letter to the WOGCC. Let me know. Thanks.

From: Hoskie, Sadie
Sent: Monday, May 06, 2013 8:52 AM
To: Minter, Douglas; Bowling, Linda; Jackson, Dan; Wireman, Mike
Cc: Garcia, Bert; Bloom, Judy
Subject: FW: fyi...from caspar newspaper

Good job, team!

From: Fay, Kate
Sent: Friday, May 03, 2013 12:12 PM
To: Hoskie, Sadie
Subject: FW: fyi...from caspar newspaper

Something to feel really good about! Nice work that has been fully acknowledged. Could you please email me the letter that we sent to WOGCC on this?

Kate

From: Sussman, Bob
Sent: Friday, May 03, 2013 8:50 AM
To: Acting Administrator; Fay, Kate; Cantor, Howard
Subject: FW: fyi...from caspar newspaper

A rare and timely accolade. Note who the players are.

Robert M. Sussman

Senior Policy Counsel to Administrator

Office of the Administrator

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Washington DC

(202)-564-7397

From: O'Hara, James
Sent: Friday, May 03, 2013 10:46 AM
To: Sussman, Bob
Subject: fyi...from caspar newspaper

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[Print Email](#)

2013-05-02T10:00:00Z 2013-05-02T10:26:04Z Saved by the EPA Casper Star-Tribune Online

22 hours ago • By

darrell.ehrlick@trib.com

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It's not often that Wyoming gets a chance to say something nice about the Environmental Protection Agency.

Yet in a case where it could count more than most, the federal agency that has a recent history of questionable decisions seems to have taken a very necessary and prudent step at stopping what could be a decision to destroy drinking water we may need in the future.

The Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission recently granted an approval to pump wastewater from wells into the Madison Aquifer, a huge underground water source that provides water to parts of four states. The wells, about 50 miles north of Casper, would not likely be anywhere near a city that might need to use the water.

For now.

And the water might not be perfectly suited for pumping and treating. Yet just because water isn't as easily accessed today doesn't mean the water won't be needed in the future.

But this questionable decision by the state to allow pumping wastewater into the Madison Aquifer isn't just about playing it safe or being ultraconservative with oil and gas development.

Instead, the commission also seemed to disregard the concern from its own scientists, including hydrologists and geologists who were concerned that the water wasn't bad enough to be unusable. Scientists were also worried that just because the water is a long way off or because it isn't ideal for drinking without some treatment, that someday with more population or different technology, the water would be very much usable.

Scientists also questioned the company's modeling for the project, which means that scientists were concerned about the oil and gas company's assumptions.

Without much explanation, the commission voted to approve the project. It offered no compelling reasons why it should set aside the scientific conclusions.

The modeling data that showed what would happen to the wastewater to make sure it didn't pose future risk is

important. These models apparently didn't convince scientists that it was safe.

Until those answers can be solved satisfactorily, then we believe the Encana project simply cannot move forward. Once the water — a precious resource in dry Wyoming — is lost it will be difficult to clean up the problem. And there's no guarantee this problem wouldn't bleed across state lines. There is too much at risk.

That's why it's a good thing that EPA stepped in. Without the science backing the decision, it's a project that could be hard to untangle.

Moreover, we believe the EPA is doing what the WOGCC couldn't — for whatever reason.

It's indeed hard to say "no" to a company with such ambitious plans. After all, saying yes means jobs and cheaper energy.

But if we can't guarantee clean, fresh water, we're going to have bigger problems than just energy in Wyoming to worry about in the future.

Instead, we can't help but look to the WOGCC. The recent decision is perplexing. The commission's charge is to balance the needs of industry, which provides a financial backbone to our state, and the consumers who could be at the mercy of well-heeled business.

But in its decision, the WOGCC seemed to side with Encana without giving assurances to residents that things were going to be OK. It gave no reasons why it discounted the science that was presented to it, or wouldn't listen to the scientists.

In other words, this looks more like a political decision than anything.

But in a move that could be considered nearly equally political, the EPA has stepped in to ensure the questions are asked and Wyoming doesn't just benefit today, but is protected for tomorrow.